

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCS-03 SCA-01
A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 OMB-01 ACDA-07
AID-05 TRSE-00 /106 W
-----201718Z 028523 /44

O R 201610Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3125
INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
SECDEF WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMEMBASSY LAGOS

S E C R E T KINSHASA 3712

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS PINS AEMR CG AO
SUBJ: SHABA INVASION - GENERAL ASSESSMENT (APR 20)

1. ON THE SURFACE, THE RECENT UPTURN IN MOBUTU'S SHORT-TERM PROSPECTS
GATHERED MOMENTUM LAST WEEK. HIS ARMED FORCES, BOLSTERED BY MOROCCAN
TROOPS, APPEAR AT LAST TO HAVE TAKEN THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST
THE KATANGANS. ALTHOUGH NO HEADWAY WAS MADE TOWARD A NEGOTIATED
SETTLEMENT, MOBUTU'S CAMPAIGN FOR DIPOMATIC SUPPORT CONTINUED TO
BEAR FRUIT. HIS RELIANCE ON INTIMIDATION TO STRENGTHEN HIS DOMESTIC
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POLITICAL POSITION, HOWEVER, REFLECTS CONTINUING TENSIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY: FRAGMENTARY REPORTS FROM THE FRONT SUGGEST THAT THE
ZAIRIAN ARMED FORCES (FAZ), WITH MOROCCAN ASSISTANCE, HAVE BEGUN
RECOVERING GROUND FROM THE KATANGANS. LOGISTICAL BOTTLENECKS MAY
STALL THE FAZ-MOROCCAN EFFORT, HOWEVER, IN PART BECAUSE THE

WITHDRAWAL OF FRENCH TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT HAS HINDERED THE ADEQUATE RESUPPLY OF FRONT-LINE UNITS. APPARENTLY NERVOUS ABOUT THEIR EXPOSED POSITION, THE FRENCH HOPE WE WILL STEP INTO THE BREACH.

3. DIPLOMATIC: MOBUTU'S ADROIT MANIPULATION OF THE SOVIET-CUBAN MENACE CONTINUES TO YIELD DIVIDENDS. IN ADDITION TO A CONTINUOUS FLOW OF MESSAGES OF SUPPORT FROM AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN MODERATES, MOBUTU RECEIVED APR 16 A SAUDI DELEGATION LED BY THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER. ALTHOUGH DENIED BY DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING TO EFFECT THAT SAUDIS HAVE PROMISED SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

4. WITH THE RETURN TO LAGOS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER GARBA, NIGERIA'S MEDIATION EFFORT MAY PICK UP AGAIN. A GREATER OAU ROLE MAY ALSO EMERGE FROM SECGEN ETEKI'S CURRENT VISITS TO LUANDA AND LAGOS. ALTHOUGH NYERERE'S SUGGESTION THAT NIGERIA PROPOSE A SPECIAL OAU MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE WAS DISMISSED BY OBASANJO ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO ORGANIZE. MOBUTU REMAINS CONVINCED HOWEVER, THAT A SUCCESSFUL COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE KATANGANS IS A PREREQUISITE FOR NEGOTIATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, TENSIONS BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE CONTINUE TO RISE.

4. POLITICAL: MOBUTU CONTINUED LAST WEEK TO RELY ON INTIMIDATION -- BOTH THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF A MOROCCAN CONTINGENT INTO HIS PERSONAL SECURITY FORCE AND THROUGH CONTINUED ARRESTS OF THOSE SUSPECTED OF OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES -- TO SHORE UP HIS DOMESTIC POLITICAL POSITION. AN ADDITIONAL SIGN OF WEAKNESS, MOBUTU'S RELIANCE ON MOROCCANS FOR PERSONAL SECURITY MAY COMBINE WITH HIS SECRET

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READINESS TO PLACE BELGIAN AND FRENCH OFFICERS IN KEY POSITIONS AT FAZ HEADQUARTERS TO ADD TO THE GRIEVANCES OF HIS ARMED FORCES. ALTHOUGH SEVERAL EXECUTIONS HAVE BEEN REPORTED, MOBUTU APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO ACHIEVE HIS OBJECTIVES WITH LESS DRASTIC MEASURES. AT LEAST SOME OF THOSE ARRESTED HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN RELEASED, INCLUDING FIKIN TRADE FAIR HEAD TUMBA TUNKADI AND FORMER LABOR LEADER KIKONGI DI MWINSA. TUMBA IS CAUTIOUSLY RESUMING HIS NORMAL ACTIVITIES, BUT KIKONGI HAS BEEN STRIPPED OF HIS MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU AND OF HIS POSITION AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE LABOR UNION.

5. THE MOST PROMINENT ARREST OF LAST WEEK, HOWEVER, DOES NOT APPEAR TO FIT THE ABOVE PATTERN OF MOBUTU INSPIRED INTIMIDATION. THE EXPERIENCE OF FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENCY BISENGIMANA, WHO WAS PICKED UP FOR QUESTIONING AND SUBSEQUENTLY PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST, MAY INDICATE INSTEAD THAT THE "REFORM FACTION" WITHIN THE REGIME IS CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS, AGAINST GROWING ODDS, TO REDUCE MOBUTU'S ROLE IN ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, GROUND COMBAT OPERATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KINSHA03712
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770137-0486
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2751501
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHABA INVASION - GENERAL ASSESSMENT (APR 20)
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, AEMR, CG, AO, NI, (MOBUTU SESE SEKO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3e912aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009